



IDRC IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|---------|
| List of Acronyms | iii |
| Executive Summary | v |
| 1 Regional Overview | Page 1 |
| 1.1 Pivotal Problem Areas | Page 1 |
| 1.2 Key Indicators of Progress | Page 3 |
| 1.3 The Research Environment | Page 4 |
| 2 Centre Programming in the Region | Page 6 |
| 2.1 Environment and Natural Resources Management | Page 7 |
| 2.2 Information and Communication Technologies for Development | Page 9 |
| 2.3 Social and Economic Equity | Page 10 |
| 2.4 Is Gender Integrative Research Progressing in SSA? | Page 11 |
| 3 The Way Forward | Page 13 |
| 3.1 Development Issues | Page 14 |
| 3.2 Country Coverage | Page 15 |

ANNEX A: Mapping of projects to countries and trends

ANNEX B: Illustrative examples from consultation with the WARO regional advisors

ANNEX C: Use of the Regional Activity Funds

LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. A.1 – The African project portfolio: Country distribution
- Fig. A.2 – Total project portfolio by Program Area
- Fig. A.3 – Projects in SSA: Location of recipient institution
- Fig. A.4 – Grants in SSA: Location of grant recipients

List of Acronyms

| | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| ACACIA | - | Communities and Information Society in Africa |
| AERC | - | African Economic Research Consortium |
| AU | - | African Union |
| AWLAE | - | African Women Leaders in Agriculture and Environment |
| CAMES | - | Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur |
| CFP | - | Cities Feeding People (PI-IDRC) |
| CIDA | - | Canadian Development Agency |
| CIP | - | International Potato Center |
| CGIAR | - | Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research |
| CILSS | - | Comité Permanent Inter Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel |
| COMESA | - | Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa |
| CORAF | - | Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricoles |
| CSPF | - | Corporate Strategy and Program Framework (IDRC) |
| DALYS | - | Disability Adjusted Life Years |
| DBSA | - | Development Bank of South Africa |
| DFID | - | Department for International Development (UK) |
| ECAPAPA | - | Eastern and Central Africa Program for Agricultural Policy Analysis |
| ECOHEALTH | - | Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health (PI-IDRC) |
| ECOWAS | - | Economic Community of West African States |
| ENDA | - | Environnement et Développement du Tiers Monde |
| ENRM | - | Environment and Natural Resources Management (IDRC Program Area) |
| ESARO | - | East and South Africa Regional Office (IDRC) |
| FAO | - | Food and Agriculture Organization (UN) |
| GEH | - | Governance, Equity and Health (IDRC) |
| GLOBE | - | Gender Leaders on Biodiversity in Ethiopia |
| GRPI | - | Genetic Resources Policy Initiative |
| HIPC | - | Highly Indebted Poor Countries |
| ICT | - | Information and Communication Technologies |
| IDRC | - | International Development Research Centre |
| IMF | - | International Monetary Funds |
| IPGRI | - | International Plant Genetic Resources Institute |
| ITGEA | - | International Trade & Gender in East Africa |
| MIMAP | - | Micro Impacts of Macro-economic and Adjustment Policies |
| NAAC | - | National Acacia Advisory Committees |
| NePAD | - | New Partnership for African Development |
| NICL | - | National Information and Communication Infrastructure |
| NGO | - | Non-Government Organization |
| NRM | - | Natural Resources Management |
| OAU | - | Organization of African Unity |
| ODA | - | Canadian Official Development Assistance |
| PBR | - | Peacebuilding and Reconstruction (PI-IDRC) |
| PI | - | Program Initiatives (IDRC) |
| PLAW | - | People, Land and Water (PI-IDRC) |

| | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| PO | - | Program Officer (IDRC) |
| PPB | - | Program and Partnership Branch (IDRC) |
| PRSP | - | Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan |
| PTCI | - | Programme de Troisième Cycle Inter-universitaire |
| RAF | - | Regional Activity Funds (IDRC) |
| REPA | - | Réseau d'expertise en Politiques Agricoles |
| ROCARE | - | Réseau Ouest et Centre Africain de Recherche en Education |
| ROSA | - | Regional Office for Southern Africa (IDRC) |
| SACCAR | - | Southern African Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural and Natural Resources Research |
| SADC | - | Southern African Development Community |
| SAPs | - | Structural Adjustment Programs |
| SATR | - | Southern African Trade Research Network |
| SSA | - | Sub-Saharan Africa |
| SEE | - | Social and Economic Equity Program Area (IDRC) |
| SEAPREN | - | Southern and Eastern Africa Policy Research Network |
| SIMA | - | System wide Initiative on Malaria and Agriculture |
| SISERA | - | Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa |
| SUB | - | Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (PI-IDRC) |
| TEC | - | Trade Employment and Competitiveness (PI-IDRC) |
| TIPS | - | Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies |
| UEMOA | - | Union Economique Monétaire Ouest Africaine |
| UNEP | - | United Nations Environment Program |
| UNF | - | United Nations Foundation |
| UNRISD | - | United Nations Research Institute for Social Development |
| WARF | - | West Africa Rural Foundation |
| WARO | - | Regional Office for West and Central Africa (IDRC) |
| WBI | - | World Bank Institute |
| WHO | - | World Health Organization |
| WTO | - | World Trade Organization |

Executive Summary

Regional Overview

Africa continues to be a troubled continent, but it is emerging from a history dominated by outside forces into a renewed sense of responsibility and autonomy. The acknowledgement that Africans must shape their own destiny or remain marginalised is codified in the New Partnership for African Development (*NePAD*) which underlines the pivotal role of African responsibility and leadership in solving Africa's problems. This trend is apparent in both major problem areas and key indicators of progress. *Conflict*, the scourge of the continent, is also the struggle to realign artificial borders and constraints to economic progress. Africans must work together to alleviate conflict, no one can do it for them. The rising level of disgust with the gross inequities of *corruption* are helping to stimulate stronger internal demands for workable *representative government* which will trim its excesses. Too long *marginalised in the global economy*, Africans are questioning "made to order" economic prescriptions and are gearing up to tackle the rough and tumble of trade debates in global fora. Likewise, at the *grassroots level*, development practitioners are turning back to approaches grounded in people's indigenous wisdom in order to solidify local ownership and thereby some degree of sustainability. Across the continent, Africans are loosening the reins of sovereignty to embrace *regional integration* which helps legitimize existing informal trade mechanisms and broadens markets to improve Africa's competitive edge. While incidences of starvation have declined, *environmental degradation* and the *burden of disease* continue to rise. The most controversial epidemic, *HIV/AIDS*, is stimulating widespread debate among Africans about social/cultural conditions as well as science and economics. The galvanizing effect of countering this threat could reinforce African determination to find new and creative solutions. While the jury is still out, and a surface analysis might induce despair over the future of Africa; an attitudinal corner has been turned which promises change and might signal real progress on the development front.

The **research environment** forms the primary milieu for IDRC operations. Accompanying the pressures outlined above, has been a decrease in local resources available for research and a delinking of local research from government institutions. The brain drain and the language divide have compounded the difficulties for researchers, with a noticeable decline in indigenous economic expertise in Francophone areas. IDRC has cooperated with existing research systems such as the CGIAR and helped create new indigenous networks to counteract these trends, while at the same time stressing the vitality of new technologies in stimulating and disseminating knowledge.

Centre Programming in the Region

IDRC's core programs in Sub-Saharan Africa are rooted in the principles established by the CSPF and cover the three major program areas. There are: four Program Initiatives (PIs) in Environment and Natural Resources Management (ENRM), three PIs in Social and Economic Equity (SEE) and one regional PI in Information and Communications Technology for Development (ICT4D).

- ENRM: More effective, productive and sustainable natural resource management and environmentally-sound agricultural production and development are the principle goals for ENRM. The four PIs: PlaW (People Land and Water), CFP (Cities Feeding People), ECOHEALTH (Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health) and SUB (Sustainable Use of Biodiversity) support research on land degradation, soil productivity, urban agriculture,

community resource management, the preservation of biodiversity and better management of ecosystems to improve human health in pursuit of these goals. All PIs have achieved some success in translating research into policy making.

- SEE: Capacity building and the establishment of networks to facilitate the research/policy nexus have formed pivotal principles for SEE activities in Africa. TEC (Trade, Employment and Competitiveness); MIMAP (Mico Impact of Macro Adjustment Policies), and PBR (Peace Building and Reconstruction) work to link policy makers, researchers and academics to strengthen African capacity to deal with trade issues, poverty alleviation, and conflict. The Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa (SISERA) is currently moving to a UN institution but will continue to provide institutional support to African economic research centres. SEE has made major strides popularizing and institutionalizing networks as key mechanisms for “closing the loop.”
- ICT4D has been at the cutting edge of exploring and popularizing the use of communications technology to promote development in Africa. The regional Program Initiative, ACACIA, grew from a project to establish demonstration projects and stimulate a more accepting policy environment, to a full-fledged PI emphasizing content as well as concrete policy development. ACACIA will soon be joined by the Centre for Connectivity in Africa. ICT4D’s ongoing goal is the promotion of research to determine and implement mechanisms which will support the utilization of new technologies for development of all Africa’s peoples.

In all three areas, a major effort has been made to stress gender integrative research through mainstreaming and special programs.

The Way Forward

The Corporate Strategy and Program Framework (CSPF) identified key development issues and the current program has been tailored to address them. Environmental management, poverty alleviation, trade, burden of disease, grass-roots approaches to development, creative blends like eco-health and urban agriculture and other burning issues are all researched within the context of IDRC’s existing program in Africa. Nevertheless, there are still some emerging African issues which remain to be tackled or which deserve more emphasis. The deterioration of the research environment in recent years, argues for a return to a more specific focus on education. The burden of disease is growing in Africa so continued IDRC involvement in projects like TEHIP in Tanzania and the emergence of Governance Equity and Health as a new PI, are steps in the right direction. The expansion of PBR from Southern into East Africa and possibly throughout the continent will hopefully stimulate research leading to better solutions to African conflict. More creative ways to contribute to the struggle against corruption and to solve the myriad of problems surrounding HIV/AIDS also need to be explored. Finally, IDRC could play a very important role in supporting the African responsibility component of the NePAD program. IDRC cannot do all things at all times, but the areas listed above merit serious examination as part of planning for the new CSPF.

The Regional Directors of ESARO and WARO wish to acknowledge the tremendous help and extensive contributions made to this report by the program and administrative staff from the regions and from those in Ottawa engaged in African programs. While the final determinations were made by the Regional Directors, this report is genuinely an African Regional report reflecting the views and inputs of

all the staff.

1 Regional Overview

Africa is emerging from a long and checkered history dominated by outside forces into a new sense of its own autonomy and responsibility. Africans are realizing that if they do not shape their own destiny, they could remain marginalised into the foreseeable future. On a complementary track, the rest of the world is gradually acknowledging that it cannot do without Africa in its quest for a more peaceful and prosperous environment. Conceptually, this shift is contained in the New Partnership for African Development (NePAD) which asserts African responsibility for African problems and invites the developed world into a partnership to grapple with the myriad complexities that compromise Africa and potentially threaten stability elsewhere. Both the problems and progress areas discussed below attest to this fundamental philosophical change.

1.1 Pivotal Problem Areas

Conflict: At first glance, conflict seems all pervasive throughout Africa from Zimbabwe to Liberia and across to Sudan. Many countries appear unable to embrace peace or to resolve festering ethnic differences, all of which limit their peoples' capacity to implement sustainable development. Conflict affects over 100 million people (one in five), the majority of whom are women and children. These wars, stemming from both intra- and inter-state causes, might be conceptualized as severe growing pains from attempts to progress beyond the barriers created by artificial geographic and ethnic borders and institutions set up to serve outside interests. Conflicts are frequently fuelled by war economies crafted to garner control over Africa's natural resources for small groups or companies. This unethical exploitation of natural wealth erodes the environment and undercuts the viability of local communities. War economies promote the prolongation of conflict to generate economic benefits for the small groups in charge. But they are beginning to break down. Angola has reached a stage of war weariness which allows for compromise over who garners which rewards. While Congo might still break down into component warlord states, negotiations could result in a federal solution which would include a modicum of national cohesion. The Sierra Leone conflict has reached the stage of reconciliation and current talks over Sudan could actually result in some resolution of longstanding internal differences. Conflict is a most unfortunate part of Africa's transition, but it also elucidates the thesis that Africans will only be able to improve their fate if they work together.

Corruption: The scourge of African development, corruption in all its manifestations, redistributes income from the poor to the rich and is a major barrier to economic efficiency. Like terrorism, corruption can be found anywhere but it is difficult to pinpoint precise entry and exit points. As the pie shrinks, ever-larger pieces must be cut off to feed the appetites of those expecting to misuse power for private benefit. With over 50 percent of Africa's economic activity in the informal (unrecorded) sector and some 40 percent of capital resources held abroad, corruption undermines the productive spirit and undercuts development. Unlike corruption elsewhere, which often simply redistributes wealth, African corruption tends to channel capital off the continent. Fortunately, Africans are getting sick and tired of playing this game. While the very complexity of corruption makes it difficult to curb, an attitudinal corner has been turned. In a strange twist, efforts by the Global Coalition for Africa and other organizations to induce leaders to step down by devising means to protect their security after leaving office are a reflection of popular disgust with corruption and its consequences.

The Environmental crisis: Since year 2000, Africa has not experienced large scale episodes of starvation such as those predominant in the 1980s and 90s, but anthropogenic environmental degradation has accelerated. Localized crises continue, as in the Sudan and the Horn of Africa, and the current

drought in Southern Africa could turn into a major famine if mismanagement by some governments is not reversed. Global climate systems such as El Niño caused major floods in Mozambique while in the Sahel, sufficient rains softened the impact of the encroaching desertification. Other notable environmental trends include:

- Deforestation in Central Africa and the Gulf of Guinea due to uncontrolled logging -- some 3.7 million hectares of forest are destroyed yearly in West Africa alone.
- Soil degradation progresses rapidly, 65% of sub-Saharan Africa's soils are under stress from unsustainable agricultural practices.
- Overexploitation of the ocean resources from industrial fishing practises espoused by European and Asian "factory" ships, undermines the livelihood of local communities.
- Marine and terrestrial pollution linked to oil extraction or mining activities remain severe, threatening the continent's bio diversity and the well being of the population.

Continuing disease burden of African populations: The African continent bears the highest burden of disease in the world, mostly infectious and vector borne illnesses. Roughly three times as more disability adjusted life years (DALYs) will have been lost in Africa in 2000 as in the industrialized countries. Children continue to be acutely susceptible to "traditional" childhood killers – diarrheal diseases, acute respiratory infections, measles, malaria and malnutrition – which are far less common elsewhere. An unhealthy environment primed by anthropogenic interference lies at the heart of the problem, according to WHO. Illiteracy, lack of basic knowledge and increasing poverty prime the pump. Already rudimentary and poorly funded African health systems were further degraded by the effects of structural adjustment programs and political instability, yet they remain one of the principal determinants of health in the region. The addition of new epidemics (HIV/AIDS) to an upsurge in older ones (malaria and TB) have completely changed the epidemiological profile of most of Africa.

The special case of HIV/AIDS: HIV/AIDS kills nearly 10 times as many people as conflict and over 28 million Africans live with this debilitating infection. AIDS may have decreased economic growth rates by as much as 2-4 percent across the continent. The very magnitude of this threat has caused some fundamental shifts in attitude. Civil society in the north and south banded together to force recognition at the Doha Trade Summit that public health must take priority over rigid patent protection. International attention has recently focussed on the degree to which AIDS orphans are augmenting bands of street children and increasing the number of child-headed households. The ravages of AIDS will affect Africa for decades, but conversely the galvanizing effect of countering the threat could help push progress.

Economic marginalization: African countries still suffer under the burden of decades of skewed economic management grounded in the metropole-biased policies of colonialism and running through the negative social consequences of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs). The overhang of debt (40-60 percent of state budgets in some cases) saps energy and resources needed for poverty alleviation. Some countries are now undertaking World Bank/IMF sponsored Poverty Reduction Strategy Programs (PRSPs) linked to the HIPC initiative to reduce external debt. Unfortunately many are still unable to meet HIPC criteria and some of the core problems which undermined the success of SAPs still remain within the successor PRSP initiatives. Both HIPC and PRSC are beginning to dominate the allocation of donor resources, leaving less available for other efforts. African countries are relatively new entrants on the trade/commerce side of the equation, and are, as yet, ill equipped to defend their interests in global trade fora. Northern countries pressure Africans to open their markets, but have been unwilling to

respond in kind. Thus Africa could pay the cost of the global trade reforms without getting full benefits in return. Finally, environmental considerations are too often left out of economic plans, thus undercutting efforts to ensure sustainability. Too long buffeted by the consequences of policies made elsewhere, key African leaders are now determined to take the initiative in determining the economic fate of their continent through efforts such as the new Africa Union (AU) and its economic program NePAD.

1.2 Key Indicators of Progress

Regionalization: As drawn by colonial powers, African national borders were based on European rather than African realities. Fear of widespread conflict and the desire to protect their own turf lead newly independent African leaders to codify and observe the sanctity of borders through the OAU charter. But most African nations are not economically viable, so regional bonding is almost imperative. Long recognized but slow to bear fruit, this principle is now being acted upon. The new African Union is designed to shift emphasis from political to continent-wide economic initiatives. In West Africa, the principal regional institutions are moving forward with excise taxation agreements and harmonization of economic policies in Union Economique Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA), and the strengthening of fiscal instruments in Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The resurrected East African Community (EAC) carefully crafted a technical basis for political agreement and is moving forward to facilitate trade and commerce within a region once known for its joint institutions. The Southern African Development Community (SADC), created to fight apartheid, is now an economic entity recognized, respected and utilized throughout southern Africa. Finally Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), which covers a large cross section of Eastern and Southern countries, has made significant strides toward establishing a free trade area. On the research side, regional organizations have seen both successes and failures. One which has stood the test of time is the *Comité Permanent Inter-États de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel*, and there are some significant other examples. There are still many bugs in the systems, but regionalisation is taking root to break down barriers that interfere with Africa's capacity to function in the global economy.

Representative Government: Across the continent, African populations are demanding and conducting elections, turning out old leaders, insisting on freer debate and generally recognizing the role of civil society. Recent popular revulsion against excessively abortive elections such as Zimbabwe and Ivory Coast exemplify this attitudinal change, as do the loud protests against sporadic attempts to muzzle the press. There is now an unprecedented democratic stability throughout the Sahel and the return of democracy in Nigeria, the West African giant, is opening a new door to cooperation in the region. Although progress is often two steps forward and one back, Africans recognize that elections do not make democracy and are demanding that the vestiges of the one-party state superimposed on multi-party systems be abolished. There is a long way to go, but the days of comfortable rule for autocrats are over; they can no longer guarantee prosperity for themselves and their supporters into the future. In parallel to this evolution of the political process, there is marked strengthening of civil society, from peasant and women's organizations to human rights associations and neighbourhood groups. Civil society is now a definitive force to contend with, made even more effective by the use of new ICT technologies.

Grass roots approaches to development: Reaching back to the "felt-need" principles espoused by the foreign assistance community in the 1970s, community based development approaches acknowledge that indigenous people know what is good for them; they just need some help getting there. This philosophy

stresses the responsibility concept. Unless the affected populace own and take responsibility for their own fate, efforts to “help” will not be sustained. The old Basic Human Needs philosophy has been modified to emphasize African leadership, and incorporates conflict resolution techniques to balance interests between competing groups. These efforts reinforce the positive effects of growing democracy, the participation of civil society in institutional reforms, and regional integration to contribute to health, development and better natural resources management in the region.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NePAD): Recently endorsed by the new African Union as its economic development plan, NePAD is above all a manifesto for African responsibility for African development. Conceived and developed by African leaders and endorsed by the international community through the G-8 meetings in Canada, NePAD is presented as a comprehensive, integrated strategic framework for the socio-economic development of Africa. A number of fundamentals or even pre-conditions are contained within the NePAD plan and come up in most discussions: political will, partnership with the international community, peace and security, and support for good governance and democracy. Nevertheless, most discussions about resources for NePAD revolve around donor flows. The implication is that Africans are asking for \$64 billion up front from donors. Yet the NePAD document asserts that in addition to ODA – mobilization of domestic resources, debt reduction, private sector flows, and trade are all key components to meet estimated resource needs. NePAD has been embraced by many in Africa and in the North as an exciting new approach especially because of its bold declaration of African responsibility. But many issues remain to be resolved, among them broadening the base of participation and support to all regions of Africa and to civil society. Suggested NePAD programs cover the waterfront of possible development initiatives, but prioritisation, organisation and implementation mechanisms are urgently needed if NePAD is not to become just one more grand scheme consigned to the shelf of unfulfilled dreams.

1.3 The Research Environment

The big picture: Many of the difficulties discussed above have a direct impact upon the research environment in Sub-Saharan Africa, notable among them the growing paucity of local resources devoted to research. Too often viewed as a secondary priority, research budgets are reallocated for debt payments or structural adjustment needs. Poor governance practices and corruption plague research efforts as they do other sectors. Even countries which developed ambitious science and technology policies in the seventies and the eighties (Kenya, Tanzania) have now abandoned them. In Senegal, research spending represents a mere 0.84% of the State budget

Linkages between government, the private sector and research institutions are weak; most ministries of research on the continent have disappeared. This has restricted direct input from research into the policy making process. Compounding the problem, African administrations all too frequently turn to outside expertise rather than seek input from local sources, as in the development of many PRSPs since 1999. In an attempt to deal with this problem, a series of quasi-government research centres, especially in the economics sector, are springing up. The IDRC created institution, TIPS (Trade and Industrial Policy Strategy), in South Africa is a case in point.

The brain-drain has continued largely unabated depriving many countries of critical expertise. Lack of remuneration commensurate with that available elsewhere, combined with the lack of critical facilities or a supportive professional environment discourage even Africans determined to return "home" to make their contribution. In response, capacity building has become a catch word for outside donors whose contribution to African institutions is gradually improving the research environment. Even global programs like NePAD offer potential for catalysing a new relationship between the political and the scientific spheres. Some recent examples of strengthening linkages between the public and/or private sectors and research capacity are listed in the accompanying box.

The great language divide: In Sub-Saharan Africa, in addition to myriad cultural differences, the colonial heritage of either French or English has a definite impact on research capacity. Like their non-English speaking colleagues elsewhere, Francophone

Africans are hampered by the dominance of English in scientific fields. They can neither read nor publish with the ease of their Anglophone colleagues. The problem appears to be especially acute in the area of Economics. Francophone economists trained in the universities of higher standing abroad usually secure positions in international organizations or remain in French research centres, leaving only their colleagues trained in the lesser schools to return home. Thus, there are fewer than a dozen externally-trained PhDs in Francophone West Africa working in their country of origin. In response to this problem over the last decade, the Programme de Troisième Cycle Inter-universitaire (PTCI) has concentrated on training credible Francophone economists. As a representative of a bilingual country, IDRC might find it cost effective and appropriate to provide increased long term support to French speaking institutions to build the capacity of Francophone scientists.

While in English speaking Africa there are more well trained economists, they are all too often lured away from academic research by better conditions in consulting firms. Nevertheless, English speaking Africa has less problem retaining its scientists because it offers both better research and training opportunities at home. Despite its political problems, Nigeria is still notable for its universities and Makerere University in Uganda is making an impressive comeback. The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), founded by IDRC, now offers a Ph.D. program based on course availability from a cross section of continental universities.

Old and New partners: IDRC is constantly expanding its network of partners. Fundamental to its continental presence are the ongoing ties with the centres of the CGIAR (Consultative Group of

New Relationships Between Political and Scientific Actors

- Some African states have given more importance to their national researchers in the establishment of development policies. For instance, in order to support his "Plan Omega" (now part of the NePAD), President Wade of Senegal brought about the creation of the *Ecole Economique de Dakar*.
- In Senegal also, the government charged its own national researchers to actively design the country's PRSP instead of relying -- like many neighbouring states -- on international consultants. (IDRC's MIMAP project team was very involved).
- A rise in the number of national, sub-regional and continental academic networks is fostering synergies in many disciplines (notably in the areas of science and Technology, Economics and the Environment).
- The development of independent expertise (albeit still dominated by the large international thematic networks or large NGOs) is facilitating reflection and research at many levels. For example, civil society involvement, the "new paradigm" promoted by bilateral aid agencies and international institutions is stimulating the creation of a new, endogenous, independent and proactive research capacity.

International Agricultural Research). Three large sub-regional networks – the Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la recherche et le développement agricoles (CORAF), the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) and the Southern African Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural and Natural Resources Research (SACCAR) also figure prominently in ENRM programming. Other partners have arisen directly from IDRC projects such as TIPS and School Net in South Africa and ATPS (African Technology Policy Studies) and AERC in East Africa. In the much newer field of ICTs, partnerships are growing with smaller government sponsored and private institutions. Many of these institutions could benefit from institutional capacity building in addition to continued financial and technical support. Areas of cooperation should continue to include direct involvement with rural communities and other stakeholders using participatory methodologies, gender integrative research, socio-economic aspects of conflict and the utilization of research results by policy makers.

New solutions for old problems: Technological developments associated with the digitisation of information have brought about transformative changes that go beyond information technology to foster new ways for communities, institutions and individuals to interact with each other. ICTs are increasingly central to the development agenda in Africa, and have been identified in NePAD as a major priority. Initially, the provision of infrastructure or hardware was essential to launch ICT experiments. This is no longer appropriate for IDRC; ICT access has doubled in SSA every year for the past several years. Telecom privatisations and the stress on good governance in some countries are also conducive to policy research on ICTs. There is real potential for finding ICT-enabled solutions to traditional development problems, but too little research has been done to determine just how ICTs can be pragmatically used in education, health, livelihoods, gender or environmental protection. Partner organizations ranging from UN agencies to local NGOs are beginning to undertake research in the ICT field, but much remains to be done. IDRC has been on the cutting edge here as elsewhere and continues to stress interdisciplinarity to ensure that the technological dimension does not overshadow real-world social, cultural, economic, environmental and political concerns.

2 Centre Programming in the Region

There are eight program initiatives (PI) active in Sub-Saharan Africa representing all three Program areas and one secretariat. Two PIs (ACACIA and PLaW) are regional while all the others are global. The Centre has been exploring one new avenue of programming (Governance, Equity and Health – GEH), with one PO situated in Dakar spending 60% of his time on this exploration. All these PIs develop and support projects which emphasize gender integrative research.

2.1 Environment and Natural Resources Management (ENRM)

This program area remains very active in Sub-Saharan Africa, even if two of the four PIs operate entirely from the Head office (CFP and ECOHEALTH). The principal emphasis is more effective, productive and sustainable natural resource management and environmentally-sound agricultural production and development. Research and dissemination of research results on efficient water/soil use, conservation and management, gender integrative methodologies and participatory approaches are cross-cutting themes of three of these PIs. All the teams have been diligent in raising awareness and advocating for the protection of the environment as conditions for sustainable development.

People, Land and Water (PLaW) is a regional PI which works exclusively in Africa and the Middle East. It emphasizes various approaches to soil and water conservation and management. In SSA, PLaW focussed research support on soil productivity and conservation and has gradually strengthened its awareness-raising for the protection of soils and water resources. Cities Feeding People (CFP) is contributing to the development of expertise on urban agriculture. Its focus has been two-fold: intensive production systems and the use of wastewater for irrigation. Urban farmers in the region often practise an intensified form of agriculture without the resources to sustainably replenish the soil. Furthermore, there is rampant use of wastewater for irrigation with worrisome implications for resource contamination and human health. Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health (ECOHEALTH) has adopted a very successful strategy of regional competitive grants, in partnership with other donors (UNEP, WHO, United Nations Foundation) and research institutions, almost doubling its budget for West and Central Africa. It is consolidating an existing partnership with the CGIAR system in East and Southern Africa using a similar methodology, with a focus on the System Wide Initiative on Malaria and Agriculture (SIMA). Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SUB) also focusses on conservation, but with a particular emphasis on flora. A majority of Africans depend on biological resources for food security, health care, shelter and fuel; the implications for them of the accelerating disappearance of biodiversity and knowledge is extremely troubling. SUB concentrates its support on three related areas: medicinal plants, traditional fruits/vegetables and traditional crops. The objective is to improve the well-being of rural communities, especially women, and increase their household nutrition and incomes through linking *in situ* conservation to production, consumption and marketing.

ENRM in SSA – A Snapshot

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|--|--------------|
| Active projects | 73 |
| Percentage of total SSA portfolio | 40% |
| Appropriations: 1999/2000 | 9 projects |
| 2000/2001 | 13 projects |
| 2001/2002 | 21 projects |
| Largest country-concentration | Kenya |
| | Burkina Faso |
| | Uganda |
| Network projects: | 17 |
| Pan African | 7 |
| West-African | 5 |
| Southern-African | 3 |
| East African | 1 |
| East-Southern African | 1 |
| Recipient countries (excl. Pan-Africa) : | |
| West Africa | 14 |
| East-Southern Africa | 13 |
| Active projects by PI: | |
| PLaW: | 24 |
| SUB: | 15 |
| ECOHEALTH: | 9 |
| CFP: | 5 |

Significant program outcomes: ENRM PIs have been effective in translating research into policy making. Results from PLaW supported projects have led to the enactment and implementation of a new harmonization of seed policies, regulations, rules, procedures and laws across countries of East Africa (Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda). In West Africa, a group of ministers from countries forming the *Comité Permanent Inter-États de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel* (CILSS) have agreed to promote the adoption of a participatory approach for the fight against desertification, based in part on the work carried out in the PLaW-supported project "*La communication participative en appui à des actions communautaires de lutte contre la désertification au Sahel*". The SUB PI co-sponsored the *International Conference on Medicinal Plants, Traditional Medicine and Local Communities* (Nairobi, May 2000). A major result of this conference was the declaration of the Decade for African Traditional Medicine by the OAU Summit (Lusaka, Zambia, 11 July 2001). SUB also created the Genetic Resources Policy Initiative (GRPI) to strengthen genetic resource policy analysis and policy making in developing countries. A multi-donor project developed in partnership with IPGRI; it will have a strong Africa focus and will be based in Nairobi. Dissemination activities undertaken by the ECOHEALTH PI prompted the development of significant partnerships and substantial co-funding for African as well as global projects, notably with the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and UNEP/WHO. The consequent visibility lead the Canadian Government to include the Team Leader as a member of the official delegation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to highlight this fresh Canadian approach to environmental and human health for sustainable development. With financial and technical support from three regional offices (ESARO, WARO and MERO), as well as CIDA and Environment Canada, ECOHEALTH is helping to organize and sponsor a joint Health and Environment Ministers' meeting for Africa to follow the WSSD gathering. CFP supported activities have generated critical information on the quantity and spatial distribution of solid wastes; waste water quality, quantity, and treatment options; as well as diversified production systems for improved revenue and livelihood. Municipal authorities are finally beginning to pay serious attention to research results on waste utilization. Many are now considering the composting of municipal solid waste to provide an input for farming activities. CFP expanded its influence in the region through the establishment of a Regional Coordinator position shared with the CGIAR system-wide initiative on urban and peri-urban agriculture, based at the CIP regional office in Nairobi. The current incumbent of this position is making significant contributions to IDRC programming.

Changes in the environment and program plans: Poverty alleviation efforts, pressures for rapid economic growth, and taking advantage of the widening trade opportunities create ever greater pressures on land and water resources in all eco-regions of Africa. This is especially true in areas offering relatively higher production potential and lower-per-unit cost products. The ongoing quest for a competitive edge in trade could further diminish attention to and investment in the protective management of land and water resources. Thus, the original goals of the ENRM program area in Africa – to support research on land degradation, soil productivity, urban agriculture, community resource management, the preservation of biodiversity and better management of ecosystems to improve human health – remain highly relevant.

2.2 Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D)

ICT4D is represented in SSA by one regional PI, ACACIA. However, following the G-8 meeting in Kanaskis, IDRC has been identified as one of the responsible institutions for developing a Centre for Connectivity in Africa. In 2001, Acacia went from being a semi-autonomous corporate program (i.e. ACACIA phase I) to an IDRC Program Initiative. Acacia I was characterised by action-research projects focussed on access through multi-purpose community telecentres, school networking activities and accelerated ICT policy development initiatives. Considerable investments in evaluation and related research were also made. ACACIA was one of the first programs to support such initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa. National ACACIA Advisory Committees (NAAC) constituted one of the channels through which ACACIA influenced the development of ICTs policies in each of its four focus countries (Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa & Uganda). As a PI, ACACIA will function more as an integrated program, with more focus on research and maintaining close links with similar IDRC initiatives such as PAN Americas, PAN Asia and Bellanet. These Initiatives and ACACIA have adopted common research themes to enhance learning and reinforce programming, but ACACIA will continue to emphasise learning from the vast array of demonstration projects it supported in its first phase. The Centre for Connectivity in Africa is still in the process of being operationalised, thus it is premature to discuss it in detail. However, it is already clear that the Centre will have a multi-stakeholder governance mechanism and its three main programmatic themes will be: (1) ICT innovation and demonstration (2) African Regional ICT Economic Futures and (3) R&D for ICTs.

Significant program outcomes: Two Ministerial meetings gave ACACIA the highest level of political support for taking the lead in furthering the agenda for ICTs and sustainable development in Africa. Much of the learning associated with Acacia's support of policy processes is being compiled in a "closing the loop" study jointly undertaken with the Evaluation Unit. Acacia II is further contributing to the body of knowledge in the field of ICTs for development by producing three pan-African research studies. These will illuminate the experiences & lessons learned while implementing telecentres and school networking activities, and on issues of empowerment with respect to community-based ICT development. Institutional support from Acacia I helped establish thirty-five telecentres in five African countries which have emerged as critical modalities for universal access in Africa. Moreover, SchoolNet South Africa has been launched as an independent NGO as has SchoolNet Africa as an umbrella institution for school networking in Africa.

Changes in the environment and program plans: Activities are well underway and transition strategies have been implemented for telecentres, school networking activities and the NAACs, which will evolve, where possible, into more autonomous think-tank to guide ICT developments. Consolidation of the research studies mentioned above are on-going, with plans for a concerted dissemination strategy that will include an international dissemination conference to be held in April 2003. Implementation of Acacia II's new programming foci has begun in earnest in the priority areas of ICT policy research, technology research and development, content development and applications and evaluation and learning. A major endeavour will also be to operationalise the Centre for Connectivity for Africa and ensure its coherence with Acacia's programming objectives.

2.3 Social and Economic Equity (SEE)

There are three PIs from the SEE program area active in Sub-Saharan Africa: MIMAP, TEC and PBR. One secretariat (SISERA) is based and active in the region and there has been one exploratory activity, Governance, Equity and Health (GEH). If there is one unifying characteristic for the three PIs (and SISERA), it is capacity-building in their respective fields of endeavour.

Micro Impacts of Macro-economic and Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) has concentrated its effort in West Africa where a large number of projects were initiated during the two year period. These are national projects in Senegal (June 2000), Benin (January 2001), Burkina (May 2001), Ghana (May 2001), and the Community Based monitoring project in Burkina (January 2002). There were also a few major international events in the region with participants representing most MIMAP recipient countries. All activities have attracted attention and interest from outside groups. Historically Peacebuilding and Reconstruction (PBR) focussed most of its activities in Southern Africa, but is increasingly supporting cross-regional programs. It has been particularly innovative in funding projects making use of ICTs to promote the development of a peace culture and to enhance human rights centred activities. Other examples of cross fertilization are two projects on the development of environmental policy and peace building in South Africa. Partnering with the Centre for Conflict Resolution in South Africa and the Bonn International Centre for Conversion, PBR is involved in a major study on demilitarization and peace building in Southern Africa. Trade Employment and Competitiveness (TEC) allocated most of its resources to strengthen the analytical and negotiation skills of Africans to operate more effectively in WTO type fora. TEC's preferred modality is international networks linking policy researchers, academics and policy makers to generate knowledge which informs policy and influences regional and multilateral level negotiations on trade and trade related issues. Examples are the *Southern African Trade Research Network (SATRN)* and the *International Trade & Gender in East Africa* project (ITGEA). *Studies on Regional Integration* Phase II focuses on a tightly defined research agenda designed to help the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) move forward in concert with global economic imperatives. In West Africa, the *Agricultural policy expert network* (REPA – Réseau d'Expertise en Politiques Agricoles) project has attracted co-funding from the World Bank, DFID, and the French development cooperation as well as likely funding from the European Union. REPA will assist the regional Council of Ministers of Agriculture to use research results for negotiations in various regional and international forums dealing with trade in agricultural products.

SEE in SSA – A Snapshot

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Active projects | 43* |
| Percentage of total SSA portfolio | 28% |
| Appropriations: 1999/2000 | 9 projects |
| 2000/2001 | 9 projects |
| 2001/2002 | 8 projects |
| Largest country-concentration | Kenya Uganda |
| Network projects: | 18 |
| Pan African | 5 |
| West-African | 4 |
| Southern-African | 7 |
| East African | 1 |
| East-Southern African | 1 |
| Recipient countries (excl. Pan Africa) : | |
| West Africa | 8 |
| East-Southern Africa | 11 |
| Active projects by PI: | |
| MIMAP | 8 |
| TEC: | 5 |
| PBR: | 8 |

* Many active projects are legacies from previous PIs no longer in existence

SISERA is a regional secretariat, active across SSA. It has established and strengthened collaborative links with a number of African regional organisations such as the African Development Bank, ECA, Africa and the Association of African Universities. SISERA continues to provide institutional and financial support to African economic research centres, principally in the area of capacity building. In addition to core and seed grants, SISERA conducts a series of training workshops aimed at enhancing the technical skills of researchers affiliated with its collaborating centres. SISERA and the World Bank Institute (WBI) are collaborating on a 2-year training program under the Bank's Poverty Analysis Initiative.

Significant program outcomes: MIMAP has made a major contribution of expertise to the teams working on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in the region. The most visible and significant contribution was made in Senegal where the local MIMAP team prepared the technical report used as the central document for the consultation process. MIMAP expertise was used intensively by the World Bank Institute's training program on poverty analysis for all of Africa. PBR activities in the region have produced tangible outcomes in the form of workshops, policy recommendations, or relevant publications. A major international conference to explore possibilities to relaunch the peace process in Angola received very high visibility. Three significant projects from the TEC portfolio have been transferred out from IDRC: core funding continues to the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), the African Technology Policy studies (ATPS) and the Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS) in South Africa. The AERC was launched in 1984 by IDRC and has since expanded to become an independent legal entity based in Nairobi with some 12 donor participants. SISERA created two sub-regional networks of African economic research in February 2000. The first, *Réseau Sur La Zone Franc* includes member centers from West and Central Africa. The second, *Southern and Eastern Africa Policy Research Network (SEAPREN)* groups countries from Eastern and Southern Africa.

Changes in the environment and program plans: Without a doubt, the closing of IDRC's Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) in Johannesburg in September 2001 was the most significant event affecting PBR programming in sub-Saharan Africa. Henceforth, most PBR programming in sub-Saharan Africa will be run out of IDRC's Nairobi office, so the PBR PI will expand to include programming options in Eastern Africa, while not losing sight of opportunities in the South. PBR will continue to emphasize larger, cross-regional activities across the continent. MIMAP tries to respond to external demands arising out of its networking activities in the region, but this is extremely difficult because of the paucity of human resources on the IDRC MIMAP team. MIMAP has made adjustments in its strategy in order to facilitate the participation of its project teams in the PRSP processes. There has not been any significant adjustment to the TEC strategy in SSA, and none is foreseen in the near future. SISERA is starting a process of transfer from IDRC to an UN African institution in response to demands from a number of its core funders. Until this process is completed, SISERA will maintain its current program directions.

2.4 Is Gender Integrative Research Progressing in SSA?

Gender integrative research is a key priority of the Centre and all three Program Areas have made efforts to mainstream gender into programming as well as develop projects which target specific gender issues.

This is practical, not ideological; experience has shown that the exclusion of women can be a blueprint for failure, in research and development.

The role of women is pivotal in most ENRM activities, especially in the area of agriculture. Sustainability is directly related to the involvement of women in both the identification and solution of problems. Each Initiative has undertaken key activities which touch directly on gender.

People Land and Water (PLaW) stresses the gender elements in natural resources management and agriculture. Specific grants explored:

- The influence of gender in managing natural environments in transition in Uganda;
- Gender specificity in agricultural research stressing the relationship between gender and efficiency/equity/sustainability undertaken by regional networks (ASERECA and ECAPAPA);
- Specific gender integration in Burkina Faso projects.

Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SUB) initiated projects and updated its own expertise in gender.

Examples include:

- Three projects in Ethiopia to examine the inter-relationship between gender, biodiversity and policy and identify gender differences in traditional health knowledge;
- Training for Program Officers in gender and a special gender treatment at the PI midterm review;
- Strengthening a project in Malawi to recognize the significance of gender in agrobiodiversity conservation;.
- Support for an FAO workshop on Gender, Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge in Mozambique.

Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health (ECOHEALTH) views gender as one of its three methodological pillars. ECOHEALTH is working to ensure gender mainstreaming through:

- Training workshops and small grants programs in West and East Africa;
- Hiring gender specialists for the core PI and specific project teams;
- Strong emphasis on gender during the PI retreat to enhance the analytical capacity of the team.

Cities Feeding People (CFP) also emphasizes both staffing and training to heighten gender awareness:

- Gender specialists were added to each of the teams examining the political economy of urban and peri-urban agriculture in Harare, Kampala and Dar es Salaam;
- Training courses on urban agriculture include modules on gender;
- Two training program (Agropolis) awardees are examining gender and urban agriculture.

SEE: IDRC programs attempt to augment gender awareness both through mainstreaming and targeting of specific projects.

Micro Impacts of Macro-economic and Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) with its emphasis on poverty incorporates gender specific analysis in its examination of its four target countries:

- In Senegal poverty data collected on each household disaggregates gender elements;
- The groundwork is being laid to apply the MIMAP-Gender Network model to Africa, eliciting the support of African national gender teams to contribute to the next Network meeting;

- Engendering Budgets promotes decision instruments for public finances which favour women to help to redress the traditional bias towards men in developing countries;
- Other MIMAP networks, MAP-Health and Micro-finance COFI contain specific gender emphasis.

Peace Building and Reconstruction (PBR) emphasizes both mainstreaming and specific gender treatment. A specific sub-theme of the PI program framework is Ensuring Women an Equal and Effective Voice. Gender projects include:

- Several South African projects worked with women participants to explore gender elements of reconciliation and coping with the aftermath of violence;
- A Security Sector Reform Handbook treated gender as a major variable, identifying both the barriers to equal participation in the security sector and the specific advantages of wider female involvement in political decision making;
- A human rights project using ICTs to train trainers emphasized the promotion and protection of women's rights while requiring gender balance in the composition of participants.

Trade Employment and Competition (TEC) conceives gender as an intermediate variable between international markets and national impacts. Both the costs and gains from trade liberalization and export performance are in part determined by gender differences. Value chain analysis helps to mainstream gender considerations, but TEC also has specific projects:

- A study of the South African labour market to distinguish linkages and movements between the formal and informal sectors found strong gender asymmetry with women entrenched in informal employment;
- A three country study in East Africa on the representation of women's interests in policy formulation and gender-differentiated welfare impacts;
- A jointly sponsored study with the Gender Unit on the market for garments in Europe and how the South African industry reacts to changes in purchasing and outsourcing practices.

ICT4D'S AFRICAN PROGRAM, ACACIA, has concentrated on gender as a key cross-cutting theme adopting a two pronged approach to mainstream gender in ICT research and programs and to identify specific projects to facilitate women's empowerment.

- Design of an analytical grid of gender as it impacts on communications projects.
- Analysis of the relationship between men and women in the use and the ownership of ICTs to make recommendations to ensure a better gender balance in the distribution of benefits.
- Specific projects targeting gender to facilitate access to ICTs by women through training, advocacy and research.

3 The Way Forward

The program framework for 2000-05 identified key development issues and the current PI activities in Africa have been tailored accordingly, as reflected in the earlier discussion. Nevertheless, some issues highlighted in the Regional Overview section, are not covered by current programming. While environmental management, poverty alleviation, trade, burden of disease, grass-roots approaches to development, and creative blends like eco-health and urban agriculture all have pride of place, other

issues such as corruption or HIV/AIDs only figure peripherally in the panoply of IDRC projects. Conflict has a home in the PBR program, but may need greater emphasis given its predominance on the African scene. Problems in the research environment point to a need for IDRC to consider broader program involvement in education. As the Centre starts developing the next CSPF, it will be useful to keep some of these concerns in mind. In that context, this section will concentrate on future recommended areas of concentration both in terms of development issues and geographical coverage.

3.1 Development Issues

Education: Under current guidelines, IDRC has no logical place from which to respond to the needs of formal education -- the empowerment of individuals through the provision of learning -- which has been identified as a human right and a social responsibility for all societies. At the June 2002 G-8 meeting hosted by Canada, the leaders of the developed world identified access to primary education for all by the year 2015 as a major development goal. In their meeting of July 2002, WARO's Regional Advisors expressed strong concerns about the absence of an Education program in the IDRC regional approach. Even after many years of significant donor investment, existing education systems have failed to grapple with the complexity of African development. Some ascribe failures in education to a lack of creative interaction between researchers, policymakers and practitioners. Information needed to successfully bring about change is fragmentary and inaccurate, or is unavailable when needed. This is clearly a "cutting edge" problem with research possibilities including comparisons with similar failures in the developed world. While IDRC supports a number of research activities related to education (notably through the exploration of the impact of ICTs on formal and informal learning), and maintains existing relationships with networks it helped create (such as the ERNWACA-ROCARE initiative); the lack of a specific education platform hampers the Centre's ability to respond to many potentially fruitful endeavours. While the framework of the current CSPF allows some latitude within the existing PI structure, consideration should be given to formalizing Centre involvement in research for education in Africa as a part of the next five year programming framework.

Governance Equity and Health (GEH): Exploration of a new set of activities for Africa under this rubric has resulted in a program framework for Governance, Equity and Health covering the next several years. Extensive consultations were held with all levels of IDRC management, both informally and through two major meetings held in Dakar and London in December 2001. Latin America was involved through a consultation in Montevideo in April 2002. Two major themes came out of these extensive deliberations: 1) the politics and processes of service delivery within the framework of health systems, and 2) access to health care and its effects on health and social inclusion. In October 2002, IDRC management will request the Board to approve the creation of a Program Initiative in GEH.

HIV/AIDs: The problem of HIV/AIDs permeates thinking about the African continent, although its prevalence is largest in East and Southern Africa. The field is full of well wishers wanting to tackle the problem, yet it is not yet clear what constitutes the best interventions. The question is whether IDRC should be playing a larger role in studying where and how creative interventions could be undertaken. GEH and TEHIP (Tanzania Essential Health Intervention Project managed by IDRC) both provide vehicles for such an examination, but other PIs could increase their focus on the disease as it impacts on the environment and economy. ECOHEALTH in concert with partners in the CIGIAR system has moved from the health bias to examining environmental determinants of AIDS risk.

Corruption: Corruption undermines most development efforts in the majority of African countries by augmenting inefficiency and transferring capital into unproductive activities, or even off the continent. While corruption is certainly not unique to Africa, the current environment of change on the continent (growth of democracy, efforts at regional integration, NePAD) makes this an ideal time to pursue research that could lead to insights on how best to tackle this problem. If the governance portion of Governance, Equity and Health (GEH) is further defined to mean “corruption” and not just “democratization,” meaningful work might be lodged in this PI. Nascent plans for further work with small-scale enterprises might also provide a vehicle, because the most severe impact of corruption is often felt in the informal sector. ESARO and WARO have funded some corruption studies through their respective RAFs (Regional Activity Funds) but mainstreaming of corruption into regular consideration within the programs of PIs established in the region would be more effective. Looking into the future, if Africa cannot get a handle on corruption, it is unlikely to develop. IDRC should consider exploring program potential in this area.

Conflict: Another area that merits increased focus is conflict. Unfortunately, as discussed earlier, conflict defines the present environment throughout the continent. It ranges from Sierra Leone/Liberia to Angola and Zimbabwe. The PBR PI has recently reorganized itself to better deal with this issue and should be fully staffed with the addition of a new Program Officer in ESARO. Nevertheless, IDRC in general, and the two African regional offices in particular, need to do more creative thinking about how to program effectively in conflict-ridden areas, what preparation is necessary for involvement in immediate post-conflict periods, and if and how research might better be used to ameliorate conflict and its lethal consequences for the development environment.

NePAD: Codified by African leaders, endorsed by Northern donors through the G-8 and adopted by the new AU as its development plan, NePAD has all the makings of a successful development strategy: but only if the ideal of African responsibility and leadership is furthered through greater acceptance by a broad spectrum of Africans. IDRC will surely be involved in NePAD activities; the African Center for Connectivity pledged by Canada at the G-8 is a case in point. It will be important for IDRC to utilize its network of contacts and its history of working in close collaboration with partners to promote and facilitate the lead role for Africans which is essential if NePAD is to become something more than just another grab bag of development ideas. In this case, it is not so much concrete projects which are important, it is the attitude and stance taken as NePAD evolves from a concept to a reality.

3.2 Country Coverage

West Africa: The major country recipient in West Africa is Sénégal, which also hosts the regional office. This concentration is largely the result of the country-biased focus of the original ACACIA corporate project. The ACACIA PI is now implementing a new regional strategy which is likely to shift the balance. A perusal of Annex A demonstrates that four countries have been the main recipients of IDRC funding in the past few years: Sénégal, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Mali. A second set of countries receive most of the remaining projects: Bénin, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. This picture is somewhat deceptive, however, because it fails to account for the large number of network projects which either span the sub region or the continent, and which are not allocated by country in the existing data base (there are 19 active “pan-African” projects and 11 active “West-African” projects).

Factoring in the marginal shifts from a more regional Acacia approach, the present deployment in the West and Central African sub region is solid and should be continued. One notable exception is Nigeria where the IDRC presence has been minimal. The return of democracy in this African giant offers numerous new options for development projects. IDRC has instituted a series of joint missions with CIDA to explore opportunities in Nigeria. Seed funding from PPB is being used to facilitate these early activities which could lead to a more substantial program. TEC is currently looking for proposals to utilize its TIPs model for a Nigerian policy institute. Programming in Nigeria could have broad implications for the West Africa region and throughout Africa given its predominance on the continent and the role President Obasanjo played in creating NEPAD.

Eastern and Southern Africa: When the Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) was closed, many of its program activities were in the category of those that could be developed and administered from elsewhere, either Ottawa or the office in Nairobi (ESARO). To meet this challenge, ESARO has targeted some of its Regional Activity Funds (RAF) for this purpose (Annex C). Acacia, through its institutional arrangement with the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) has set up a satellite office in the Johannesburg area to cover Southern Africa programs. This is essential for Acacia in its regionalization efforts. ESARO has just contracted an ex-ROSA staff member to do some outreach and programming on a contingency basis. Working to solidify IDRC operations in Southern Africa will be a major thrust for ESARO in the coming year.

PBR previously covered only ROSA countries. With a new PO in place in the Nairobi office, PBR will spread its scope to East Africa while still maintaining operations in the South. War-torn Congo straddles both West and East Africa. ESARO has touched on Congo with two small RAF projects but as and when peace breaks out, the two regional offices will coordinate to determine what role if any IDRC can play in reconstruction and development there. ESARO has also sponsored a small program in Somalia with RAF resources and one which will transfer research methodology for reconstruction developed in Somalia to Rwanda. The new Alumni Network currently under development will help the sub-region to better explore possibilities in places like Ethiopia, Burundi and Eritrea.